

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
BEAUMONT DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		DOCKET 1:17CR151
VS.		DECEMBER 6, 2019
MOHAMED IBRAHIM AHMED		BEAUMONT, TEXAS

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REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF JURY TRIAL EXCERPT
TESTIMONY OF LORENZO VIDINO

BEFORE THE HONORABLE MARCIA A. CRONE,
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE, AND A JURY

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1 (Open court, defendant present, jury present.)

2 THE COURT: Call your next witness.

3 MS. COOK: United States calls Dr. Lorenzo
4 Vidino.

5 (The oath is administered to the witness.)

6 MS. COOK: May I proceed, your Honor?

7 THE COURT: Yes.

8 MS. COOK: Thank you.

9 DIRECT EXAMINATION OF LORENZO VIDINO

10 CALLED ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT

11 BY MS. COOK:

12 Q. Good afternoon.

13 A. Good afternoon.

14 Q. Would you please state your name and spell it for
15 the record?

16 A. Sure. Lorenzo Vidino. That's L-O-R-E-N-Z-O
17 V-I-D-I-N-O.

18 Q. How are you currently employed?

19 A. I am the director of the Program on Extremism at
20 the George Washington University.

21 Q. Could you please tell the jury a little bit about
22 what the Program on Extremism does.

23 A. We are a research center. What we do is we
24 research terrorism, mostly in the United States but also
25 abroad; and we work very closely with law enforcement,

1 with intelligence agencies. What we do is we produce
2 reports which are based on our research and basically
3 that is for public dissemination; but, as I said, we also
4 work very closely with policy makers, with law
5 enforcement, so on and so forth.

6 Q. And in your research do you analyze trends having
7 to do with extremist groups?

8 A. Yes. That is what we do.

9 Q. Is there any particular type of extremism that you
10 focus on?

11 A. Religiously motivated extremism, I would say, most
12 related to groups like ISIS and al-Quaeda.

13 Q. Will you please describe the various sources from
14 which the program collects its information?

15 A. Sure. We try to rely on what I would refer to as
16 "primary sources" as much as possible. We work a lot on
17 documents that come straight from terrorist groups, for
18 example, but also from the court system. For example, we
19 look at a lot of trial records, court records, documents
20 coming from government agencies.

21 We supplement that research with a lot of the
22 work that we do online. We have a small team, for
23 example, that looks at social media, that monitors
24 platforms like Facebook, like Twitter.

25 And then we do the work with academics, too,

1 with -- I would say with a journalistic twist. We try to
2 pursue leads and then try to really use a
3 multidisciplinary approach to understand the topic.

4 Q. In addition to the sources you've mentioned, do
5 you also do interviews or have meetings with relevant
6 individuals?

7 A. Yes. We try to do that as frequently as possible.
8 That means talking to, when possible, of course,
9 individuals who are involved in terrorist activities,
10 convicted terrorists, former terrorists. We talk to
11 people who are involved in investigations related to
12 terrorism, prosecutors, FBI agents, intelligence
13 agencies; and we talk to family members of individuals
14 involved in terrorism cases. Again, we try to speak to
15 as many people as possible that can help us understand
16 some of these dynamics.

17 Q. Do you have a methodology for determining which
18 sources you are willing to rely upon for your research?

19 A. Yeah, of course. I would say that's fairly common
20 in academia and in general in analysis of terrorism.
21 There are sort of primary sources, which are those that
22 come from highly reliable sources, generally that come
23 straight from, let's say, the government; but also in
24 that case one filters, of course, that information.

25 I would say secondary sources, which would be

1 sort of media reporting. And then in that case as well,
2 one has to differentiate between more reliable sources
3 like, let's say, the *New York Times* and stuff that one
4 finds in less reliable media sources.

5 Q. Have you done, or do you currently do, similar
6 work in Europe?

7 A. Yes, I do.

8 Q. Could you please describe for the jury what you do
9 in Europe.

10 A. Well, I divide my time basically between the
11 United States and Europe; and the research that I do and
12 part of my team does is basically focused on terrorism
13 dynamics in a variety of European countries.

14 And, again, we use a very multidisciplinary
15 research approach. We try to collect as much information
16 as possible and then distill that knowledge into reports
17 which are publicly available; and then we disseminate
18 them also through to briefing, presentations, lectures to
19 a variety of audiences.

20 Q. Would you please describe your educational
21 background?

22 A. Sure. I have a law degree from the University of
23 Milan in Italy. Then I have a master's degree from Tufts
24 University in Boston, and that was in security studies in
25 the Middle East. And then I have a PhD in security

1 studies, also from Tufts University.

2 Q. And could you tell the jury a little bit about
3 what security studies is?

4 A. It is basically everything that involves -- that
5 has to do with the use of force, the use of military
6 force or terrorism. And my specific case was terrorism
7 in the Middle East and the West.

8 Q. Does international security studies borrow from a
9 variety of fields?

10 A. Yes. From social sciences, from anthropology,
11 from a variety of sources, yes.

12 Q. What about military fields?

13 A. Yes, absolutely. That was part of my training.
14 We studied extensively warfare, guerilla warfare,
15 symmetric/asymmetric warfare. That is a big part of
16 security studies.

17 Q. Have you published any books?

18 A. Yes, I have.

19 Q. What have you published?

20 A. I have published seven books, I believe. The
21 first one was on al-Qaeda in Europe; that was back in
22 2005. And I've published a variety of other books,
23 always on topics related to terrorism.

24 Q. Could you describe a bit about the book *Al-Qaeda*
25 *in Europe*? What was the focus of the book?

1 A. I looked at different networks that are operating
2 throughout Europe, basically starting from the mid to
3 late 1980s, when you started to have a presence of
4 extremist groups linked to what was then not yet al-Qaeda
5 in Europe, then throughout the Nineties up until 2005. I
6 looked at France. I looked at some Scandinavian
7 countries. I looked at Germany, Italy, the U.K.,
8 examined some of the recruitment trends, looked at some
9 of the terrorist attacks that have been conducted in
10 Europe.

11 Q. And do you continue to expand your knowledge of
12 and research those same issues up to the present day?

13 A. Constantly. The field and the subject is always
14 changing; so, one has to keep up, of course.

15 Q. You've mentioned that you work in Europe.
16 Obviously you travel there. Have you traveled to any
17 other countries to do field work?

18 A. In Europe, you mean?

19 Q. Anywhere in the world.

20 A. I think in Europe, I think I've been pretty much
21 to every country except some of the really small ones.
22 And I've traveled also to the Middle East and North
23 Africa to work in parts of Southeast Asia.

24 Q. Is your program currently involved in any projects
25 related to ISIS media?

1 A. Yes. We have several. I would say the most
2 high-profile ones, we are the research partners of the
3 *New York Times*. We are currently digitizing,
4 translating, and analyzing 15,000 internal ISIS documents
5 that *New York Times* reporters acquired on the ground in
6 Iraq. So, we are basically the academic research
7 partners of the *New York Times*.

8 We also work frequently with other media
9 outlets. We monitor a lot of what ISIS and other groups
10 similar to ISIS put out in terms of propaganda. We
11 monitor that on a variety of platforms, and then again we
12 analyze that. And part of the reason the center exists
13 is to disseminate that knowledge to the public; so,
14 working with the media is a big part of what we do.

15 Q. So, of the 15,000 documents that you are analyzing
16 for the project, can you briefly describe to the jury?
17 What kinds of things are you seeing?

18 A. These are basically internal bureaucratic
19 documents. ISIS had created a state -- *de facto* had
20 created a state the size of France, probably the size of
21 Texas. That's pretty much similar. And it had a
22 bureaucracy to run that state. It had departments, had
23 agencies. It had a DMV. It had a consumer protection
24 agency.

25 So, those documents basically are documents

1 taken from a variety of these agencies and provide a
2 snapshot of how what was a terrorist group functioned
3 also as a *de facto* state.

4 Q. I'd like to turn now to what I'll describe as the
5 "global jihadist movement." Could you please give the
6 jurors a brief explanation of where and how this movement
7 began.

8 A. I would say it's fair to say that it starts in the
9 1980s; although, you can argue there are groups that had
10 similar ideology even before that. But in the 1980s
11 there was the war in Afghanistan that pitted the --
12 certain forces in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union.
13 And thousands of individuals that adopted what I would
14 call "jihadist ideology" flocked to Afghanistan to fight
15 against the Soviets; and that created sort of an
16 international brigade of individuals that, as I said,
17 adopted this ideology. And that was really the beginning
18 of a movement that then spread throughout the world.

19 Q. Did that movement create space for or allow the
20 emergence of the organization we know as al-Quaeda?

21 A. Al-Quaeda was basically the byproduct of that
22 movement. As the war against the Soviets ended in 1988,
23 the -- some of the leaders of those foreign fighters --
24 they were not Afghans; they were people who were coming
25 from other parts of the world to fight there against the

1 Soviet Union. They decided that that group of
2 individuals that had come together to fight the Soviets
3 needed to expand their target and go back to their
4 countries of origin and continue to fight to establish
5 Islamic States there.

6 In Afghanistan they created this organization
7 called "al-Qaeda." "Al-Qaeda" means "the base" in
8 Arabic. And that organization was to be, in the
9 intention of its founders, the base for groups operating
10 on a global scale to continue their operations.

11 Q. In other words, was al-Qaeda supposed to be a
12 resource for various organizations in order to carry out
13 violent jihad?

14 A. Exactly. So, al-Qaeda was supposed to be and was
15 indeed -- it became that -- a base that would provide
16 expertise/knowledge on how to carry out operations, would
17 provide training. It had training camps where people
18 from all over the world would go and receive that
19 training in skills that range from how to secretly
20 communicate to how to build explosives, how to handle
21 weapons.

22 And once they received that knowledge, they
23 would go back to their countries of origin to carry out
24 terrorist attacks and fight locally. So, it was a global
25 entity that was aimed at aiding local entities operating

1 throughout the world.

2 Q. You mentioned that al-Quaeda established training
3 camps. Where did the first training camps for al-Quaeda
4 emerge?

5 A. Al-Quaeda had several training camps. Most of
6 them were located in the part of Afghanistan close to the
7 border with Pakistan. That is part of the country with a
8 lot of mountains, very difficult to penetrate. And
9 al-Quaeda occupied some land in that area, which was
10 basically for a long time really not controlled by any
11 government, and established those training camps.

12 Q. Would you please look at the binder that's there
13 before you and turn to Tab 32?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Do you recognize what's contained under that tab?

16 A. It's a map of the world.

17 Q. Does it appear to be accurate?

18 A. Yes. I believe so.

19 MS. COOK: I move for the admission of
20 Exhibit 32.

21 THE COURT: Any objection to 32?

22 DEFENDANT AHMED: I object to that.

23 THE COURT: Okay. Why do you object to a map
24 of the world?

25 DEFENDANT AHMED: I have no objection.

1 THE COURT: All right. That's admitted.

2 MS. COOK: Thank you. May Exhibit 32 be
3 published to the jury?

4 THE COURT: Yes.

5 MS. COOK: And if we could zoom in on -- yes.

6 BY MS. COOK:

7 Q. Dr. Vidino, I believe that there is a pointer on
8 the desk in front of you. If you could show the jury
9 where Afghanistan is on this map.

10 A. Here (indicating).

11 Q. And the area that you were just describing, the
12 border between Afghanistan and Pakistan?

13 A. Yeah. (Indicating.) Pakistan is south of --
14 yeah -- southeast of this area. These are very high
15 mountains here, the Hindu Kush mountains. To the south
16 is Pakistan. To the north is Afghanistan. This is the
17 area where the camps were located.

18 Q. The time period that we're talking about -- 1980s,
19 1990s -- in addition to the ruggedness of that area, were
20 there any other conditions that were conducive to the
21 establishment of training camps?

22 A. There were the political conditions. In the late
23 Eighties and early Nineties, basically Afghanistan was
24 lawless; and different groups, different militia fought
25 for control of the country. So, it was an anarchic

1 scenario, was an ideal setting for al-Quaeda to operate,
2 or at least parts of it.

3 But it became even more fertile of an
4 environment in the late Nineties because a group known as
5 the Taliban came to control Afghanistan. The Civil War
6 that engulfed Afghanistan in the Nineties, the Taliban
7 emerged as the victors. They took control of most of
8 Afghanistan. And the Taliban were very close to
9 al-Quaeda. They were -- first of all, they embrace the
10 same ideology. They were partners. So, they allowed
11 al-Quaeda to operate and to carry out its activities,
12 including running training camps.

13 Q. Are you familiar with a training camp called
14 "Khalden"?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Was Khalden an al-Quaeda training camp?

17 A. Yes, it was.

18 Q. Where was it located?

19 A. Again in the area here (indicating) -- difficult
20 to point precisely, but in the border area between
21 Afghanistan and Pakistan.

22 Q. Are you familiar with a training camp called
23 "Derunta"?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Was that also an al-Quaeda training camp?

1 A. Yes. I'd say Khalden and Derunta were the two
2 most important ones, the largest ones, the ones that
3 operated the longest.

4 Q. And is Derunta basically in the same area --

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. -- as Khalden?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. Did individuals come from outside Afghanistan to
9 attend those training camps?

10 A. They came mostly from outside Afghanistan. Those
11 camps were meant for people from Afghanistan -- from
12 outside Afghanistan, for people from all over the world
13 to go there, receive training, and then return to their
14 countries.

15 Q. Does al-Quaeda have affiliates?

16 A. It does.

17 Q. What is the relationship, if any, between
18 al-Quaeda and its affiliates?

19 A. A lot of people make the analogies to a franchise
20 system. Al-Quaeda is the mother group; and then there
21 are groups operating at the local level, from the Sahara
22 Desert to the Philippines, to Somalia, to Iraq, a variety
23 of places, where local groups that maybe initially
24 started off at the very local level for very local
25 political dynamics at some point entered into the orbit

1 of al-Qaeda. They used the name of al-Qaeda in a way
2 that makes them part of a global family; and that is
3 important, both from an ideological and operational point
4 of view. So, they are to some degree independent; they
5 operate locally. But at the same time, they recognize
6 the leadership of al-Qaeda as a global organization.

7 Q. Would al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula be an
8 example of an al-Qaeda affiliate?

9 A. Correct. That's one of the most important ones.

10 Q. What about al-Qaeda in the Maghreb?

11 A. Also, exactly the same.

12 Q. Are you familiar with an organization called
13 "al-Shabaab"?

14 A. I am.

15 Q. Can you please describe to the jury a bit about
16 where al-Shabaab tends to be located and its origins?

17 A. Al-Shabaab is an organization that is based in
18 Somalia. It became prominent in the late 2000s. Somalia
19 is a country that has been engulfed in a Civil War for
20 more than 30 years. In 2006, in particular, al-Shabaab
21 became -- rose in a way as one of the main groups
22 operating in Somalia. It started controlling territory I
23 believe in the southern parts of Somalia and -- if I
24 might point -- including the capital here, (indicating)
25 Mogadishu.

1 So, al-Shabaab emerged as a fairly small
2 militant group but at some point came to control large
3 parts of Somalia and *de facto* became sort of a state in
4 itself. It's still very much operating today; although,
5 it no longer controls large part of Samolia.

6 Q. What is the objective of al-Shabaab?

7 A. The creation of an Islamic State in Samolia that
8 is at the local level. At the same time, as part of the
9 al-Quaeda brain, the al-Quaeda franchise, it has global
10 ambitions. That means carrying out attacks against a
11 variety of global enemies, from the United States to
12 European countries and so on.

13 Q. And is this a fair illustration of how the
14 organizations within the global jihadist movement work?
15 In other words, there is a local organization carrying
16 out violent jihad there in the interest of establishing
17 an Islamic State in that area but also hoping that this
18 same goal is achieved across the globe?

19 A. That is correct. The way people would put it,
20 they think globally but act locally. They operate on the
21 ground in a certain environment in which they are
22 created, in which they are born; but they are part of a
23 larger global family. They are, of course, constant --
24 there is, of course, constant communication and
25 cooperation between all members of this global franchise.

1 There is a common global goal, but then every
2 organization that is part of this family operates at the
3 local level.

4 Q. Is it possible to be a member of or associated
5 with al-Shabaab and still support al-Quaeda
6 ideologically?

7 A. Yes. Absolutely.

8 Q. And is it possible to be a member of an
9 organization such as al-Shabaab and also ideologically
10 support other organizations such as ISIS?

11 A. With ISIS it's slightly more controversial.
12 Al-Shabaab as an organization is affiliated to al-Quaeda;
13 so, I would say that every member of al-Shabaab is also
14 part of the al-Quaeda family.

15 With the emergence of ISIS over the last few
16 years, parts of al-Shabaab have become closer to ISIS.
17 There is sort of a global competition between the two big
18 brains. One is al-Quaeda; one is ISIS. And within
19 al-Shabaab there have been conflicts as to whether the
20 organization should stay loyal to al-Quaeda or switch and
21 shift its allegiance to ISIS. The current leadership is
22 still loyal to al-Quaeda. Some members of al-Shabaab
23 have become more loyal to ISIS.

24 Q. I'd like to turn to al-Quaeda in Europe.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Was al-Quaeda able to develop networks in Europe?

2 A. Yes. It developed networks from the early
3 Nineties, and it co-opted networks of militants that
4 existed before then. So, there is a long-established
5 presence in most European countries.

6 Q. And when we talk about networks in Europe, could
7 you perhaps give the jurors some examples of cases that
8 illustrate how the networks work in Europe?

9 A. Sure. I don't think there is any better example
10 than the 9/11 hijackers. Some of the core members of the
11 group that carried out the September 11 attacks had been
12 recruited in Hamburg, Germany, so not somewhere in the
13 Middle East; but they were graduate students of the
14 university in Hamburg. They were originally from Egypt,
15 from Saudi, from Yemen; but they met in Hamburg.

16 An al-Quaeda recruiter who had long lived in
17 Hamburg, Germany, spotted them, if you will, recruited
18 them, sent them to training camps in Afghanistan. And
19 once in Afghanistan, they were again spotted by al-Quaeda
20 leadership there and tasked to come to the United States
21 to carry out the 9/11 attacks.

22 That's, I would say, just one of the many
23 examples of how these networks work. They recruited
24 people. They indoctrinated people. They collected funds
25 for the organization. They -- you know, pre-Internet era

1 they printed propaganda. They disseminated video
2 cassettes. If we're talking about the 1990s, that was,
3 again, before the Internet. So, those networks have
4 always been very, very active throughout Europe.

5 Q. Are there any -- or were there at the time --
6 conditions in Europe that made European countries
7 vulnerable to the emergence of these networks?

8 A. Sure. I would say -- I mean, first of all, I want
9 to make it clear that we are talking about a very small
10 number of people that are involved in these activities.
11 This is a minority, a fringe of a fringe of a fringe, if
12 we're talking about individuals in Europe who are
13 involved in al-Quaeda activities. The vast majority of
14 Muslims living in Europe, like in other places, have no
15 sympathy whatsoever for this ideology.

16 But within Europe there have been a variety of
17 charismatic al-Quaeda recruiters who received political
18 asylum in a variety of European countries and were sort
19 of allowed to operate and spread their ideology in
20 certain mosques or in certain informal networks. So, in
21 a way -- I guess as a European, I can say it -- Europeans
22 were a bit naive and didn't realize that some of these
23 individuals that they had harbored were basically
24 indoctrinating European Muslims.

25 Q. Would generous social welfare benefits play a role

1 in the selection of European countries for a network to
2 take place?

3 A. Yeah, of course. That was also one element.
4 Particularly in central and northern European countries,
5 there is a very generous welfare system. And, of course,
6 for individuals whose goal is not really to work and
7 integrate into society but, rather, to continue to carry
8 out activities, obtaining funds from the State is the
9 ideal scenario.

10 Q. We've mentioned violent jihad a couple of times
11 and the type of training at the camps that focuses on
12 weapons and explosives and the more military aspect. But
13 is the facilitation of terrorism also a critical aspect
14 of the success of terrorist organizations?

15 A. Yeah, absolutely. I mean, the terrorist attacks,
16 the violent part, that's sort of just the tip of the
17 iceberg, if you will. That's the most visible and
18 dramatic manifestation of what is terrorism.

19 But behind it, there is a whole system of
20 procurement, of support, of logistical activities that
21 are necessary that range from ideological indoctrination
22 to elements like providing a salary to individuals who
23 are part of the group, to procuring documents, to
24 procuring weapons, to organize travel for individuals
25 from one place to the other. So, there are a variety of

1 activities which are not immediately -- don't immediately
2 manifest themselves as a terrorist act; but they are as
3 important as the others when it comes to terrorism.

4 Q. Do you have any observations about the capacity of
5 the European criminal justice system in the time period
6 we've been talking about -- 1990s, early 2000s -- to
7 address terrorism facilitation-type activity?

8 A. Every country should be treated differently. Of
9 course every European country has its laws. But,
10 generally speaking, I would say the system was not
11 exactly up to speed with the challenge, whether we're
12 talking about legislation, laws on the books being
13 capable of stemming the phenomena or simply the attention
14 of law enforcement intelligence agencies in a pre-9/11
15 environment wasn't exactly there. This was not perceived
16 to be a problem for Europe. This is something foreign
17 and exotic that somewhat existed in Europe. People were
18 aware of it; but it was not perceived as a direct threat
19 to Europe so, therefore, somewhat tolerated.

20 Q. Are new recruits important to terrorist
21 organizations?

22 A. Yes, very much so.

23 Q. Why so?

24 A. Terrorist groups always have to rely on more
25 people. They need, they want, they seek to expand. Of

1 course they will vet -- some groups more, some groups
2 less -- but they will vet new people. But they always
3 need more people to carry out the attacks, to provide
4 logistical support. So, they always are investing
5 significantly in attracting new people. That's why a lot
6 of these groups -- al-Qaueda and ISIS in particular --
7 are very -- invest heavily in propaganda, in trying to
8 attract new recruits.

9 Q. Do terrorist organizations put out propaganda?

10 A. They do significantly. Again, al-Qaueda and ISIS
11 have been -- are the models in terrorism studies for
12 organizations that have invested -- that have produced,
13 from a both quantitative and qualitative point of view,
14 very high-level propaganda. We're talking about all
15 forms of propaganda from physical publications, magazine
16 books, to, in this day and age, very sophisticated online
17 products, videos, accounts on all social media platforms.

18 And in many cases this propaganda is of high
19 quality, very well-produced, if you will, Hollywood
20 style, MTV style, very sophisticated, and at the same
21 time disseminated through a very broad network of
22 channels if we're talking about online or, in a
23 pre-Internet era, through a very broad network of
24 individuals who would disseminate the pamphlets and the
25 video cassettes, if you're talking about the 1990s.

1 Q. And is this -- part of the work that you do is
2 analyzing the propaganda that is produced by terrorist
3 organizations?

4 A. That's a big part of what we do, yes.

5 Q. I'd like to talk about a particular individual
6 involved in the production or dissemination of
7 propaganda. Are you familiar with someone named Anwar
8 al-Awlaki?

9 A. I am.

10 Q. Who was that person?

11 A. Anwar Awlaki was a U.S.-born cleric who was, I
12 would say, one of the very first jihadist propagandists
13 to understand the importance of the Internet and was very
14 active -- we're talking about the late Nineties, early
15 2000s -- was very active in disseminating his own
16 lectures and propaganda on a variety of platforms, mostly
17 YouTube, online and to reach a very broad audience.

18 Awlaki was also extremely influential in
19 jihadist circles, particularly in the English language
20 world, because he was a very good speaker, very
21 charismatic, very knowledgeable, could one second be
22 citing the Quran in perfect Arabic and the next second
23 use a very colloquial American expression. And his
24 ability to speak in both languages is what made him
25 very -- was one of the reasons that made him very

1 appealing to a lot of individuals who radicalized.

2 So, I'm hard-pressed to find individuals in
3 the English-speaking world who radicalized, became
4 terrorists, who were not consumers of Awlaki propaganda.
5 And still today, ten years after Awlaki's death, he's
6 still very -- his lectures, his words, his books are
7 still very widely disseminated in jihadi circles.

8 Q. Would it be fair to say that one of the reasons
9 for Awlaki's prominence is he would take Arabic material
10 and translate it or make it accessible to an
11 English-speaking audience?

12 A. Yes. He would not simply translate it. He would
13 make it, as you said, accessible. He would sort of make
14 it more culturally -- sort of adapted culturally for an
15 American or Western audience. So, he would be using --
16 not just translating it into English but using the right
17 expressions; so, he would make it very appealing to his
18 audience, which are mostly young, second-generation
19 Western-born Muslims.

20 Q. Are you familiar with the Awlaki lecture called
21 "Constants on the Path to Jihad"?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And would this be an example of an originally
24 Arabic text that Awlaki made accessible to
25 English-speaking audiences?

1 A. Correct. It was a text originally written by a
2 very prominent leader of al-Qaeda that Awlaki translated
3 and adapted into English.

4 Q. I'd like to turn to ISIS. If you could please
5 describe for the jury the origins of ISIS and its
6 original leadership.

7 A. Sure. So, ISIS went through several name changes,
8 different iterations; so, the name -- what is today the
9 Islamic State or ISIS goes through at least five or six
10 name changes over time.

11 The core group is a small group that was
12 created in 1999 by a Jordanian militant known as Abu
13 Musab al-Zarqawi. And Zarqawi was a very prominent
14 jihadist leader, created what was a fairly small and
15 secondary group that had links to al-Qaeda but was sort
16 of a, as I said, second-tier group until 2003-2004 with
17 the U.S. invasion of Iraq, because that small group just
18 so happened to be operating in Iraq; and the U.S.
19 invasion of Iraq made it sort of one of the most
20 prominent jihadist groups because it took the lead in
21 terms of attacking U.S. forces in Iraq in 2003-2004.

22 The group then became -- and I'm shortening a
23 very complicated story. It became officially "al-Qaeda
24 in Iraq." That's in 2004. So, it became the official
25 affiliate, official branch of al-Qaeda in Iraq in 2004.

1 By 2006 it began to go by the name of "Islamic
2 State in Iraq."

3 And by 2012, as it expanded its operation to
4 Syria, it went by the name of "ISIS," simply adding the S
5 after. You know, Islamic State in Iraq and Sham, which
6 is the Arabic name for "Syria."

7 Q. You mentioned that it began expanding its
8 operations into Syria. What was ISIS doing in this area
9 of the world?

10 A. Well, so, ISIS basically took advantage of the
11 Civil War that started engulfing Syria and still engulfed
12 Syria but began in 2011. There were several groups that
13 began fighting the Syrian regime. ISIS -- that was at
14 the time only called "ISI," Islamic State in Iraq --
15 started sending forces across the border from Iraq to
16 Syria -- the two countries are neighboring -- started
17 sending troops to Syria and operating on the ground in
18 Syria. Because of its military skills, because of its
19 resources, it immediately became one of the most
20 successful forces on the ground in Syria and basically
21 created -- started controlling territory on both sides of
22 the Iraqi-Syrian border.

23 Q. Did ISIS begin to achieve significant prominence
24 in mainstream media about the time that you are talking
25 about?

1 THE COURT: Perhaps the map would be helpful.

2 MS. COOK: Sorry?

3 THE COURT: The map. He's talking about the
4 border area between Iraq and Syria. Perhaps the map
5 could be useful.

6 MS. COOK: Could we bring up 32?

7 THE WITNESS: Probably something a bit bigger.

8 MS. COOK: Can you enlarge that area?

9 A. So, Iraq is east; and west is Syria. This
10 (indicating) is the Iraq-Syrian border.

11 What happened is that ISIS was first operating
12 here (indicating), in northern Iraq; and then by two
13 thousand -- sorry -- northwest Iraq. And then by 2011,
14 it started moving militants into Syria and started basic
15 controlling territory there.

16 By 2014 it occupied this area (indicating),
17 basically north/northwest Iraq and parts of Syria, a
18 territory, as I said earlier, the size of France, give or
19 take, so not a small territory; and it controlled that
20 territory as a state.

21 That is -- to go back to your question -- the
22 time where Western media started paying attention to the
23 group because it transcended being simply a terrorist
24 group. It became basically a *de facto* state which
25 occupied, controlled, and administered territory. Of

1 course, it still used terrorist tactics. It still used
2 very brutal tactics, indiscriminate killings of
3 civilians, all kind of brutalities against the local
4 population; but at the same time, it was *de facto* a
5 state.

6 Q. And was the creation of a state the primary
7 objective of the organizations under the global jihadist
8 movement?

9 A. That's what all jihadist groups want, creating a
10 state that is ruled under their interpretation of Islamic
11 law, of Sharia, which is, of course, a very extremist
12 interpretation of Islamic law. But to jihadist groups
13 like ISIS, like al-Quaeda, the only system of governance
14 that is acceptable, because in their worldview
15 God-mandated, is the one that implements Islamic law.
16 Any other system of governance, democracy, monarchy, you
17 name it, is not legitimate, is against God, is man
18 substituting himself to God and, therefore, illegitimate.
19 So, all jihadist groups aim to establish an Islamic State
20 ruled by Islamic law.

21 Q. And in terms of controlling territories, had any
22 other organization up to that point come close to
23 achieving the success that ISIS was achieving?

24 A. Al-Quaeda tried through affiliates in some parts
25 of the world. We mentioned earlier that al-Shabaab in

1 Somalia came to control territory. Al-Quaeda -- another
2 al-Quaeda affiliate managed to do so in Mali, which is in
3 Africa. But it wasn't -- those attempts were not even
4 remotely as successful as what ISIS did. It created sort
5 of a stable presence, a much more successful effort.

6 Q. Did people come to join ISIS and fight with them
7 from across the globe?

8 A. Yes. According to United Nations estimates, some
9 sixty, 70,000 people traveled from abroad -- so, that
10 means from outside Syria and Iraq, outside the
11 territory -- to join ISIS and to participate in what ISIS
12 sold as the construction of this new state.

13 Q. And given that this was a conflict, a military
14 conflict, were new recruits important to ISIS?

15 A. Crucially important in primarily fighting and
16 secondarily conducting all the other activities that are
17 of logistical support to fighting.

18 Q. Would funding and logistical and other material
19 support have been important to ISIS?

20 A. As important as fighting.

21 Q. Is jihad expensive?

22 A. Particularly when conducted on the scale of what
23 ISIS did, absolutely. It is very expensive. One needs
24 to -- in the case of ISIS -- govern a territory, provide
25 services.

1 But even when it's on a smaller scale,
2 conducting terrorist attacks, yes, you need resources.
3 People have to pay for weapons, for travel, for forged
4 documents, sustain their families. So, absolutely, money
5 is a big part of it.

6 Q. In 2014 did ISIS take a significant step?

7 A. Yeah. I believe what you are referring to is the
8 June, 2014, declaration of the caliphate. What ISIS did
9 is it declared itself a caliphate and declared its leader
10 as the caliph. The caliph is the person that, in Islamic
11 history, reconciles both political and religious
12 authority.

13 And there hasn't been a unanimously recognized
14 caliph since 1923, and the leader of ISIS claimed to be
15 the new caliph. Of course, the overwhelming majority of
16 Muslims worldwide rejected that claim. But ISIS believes
17 that al-Baghdadi, who was the leader that was killed very
18 recently, was the caliph and that the state they created
19 was the caliphate, so the legitimate Islamic State.

20 Q. What had happened to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi by 2014?

21 A. Al-Zarqawi had been killed almost a decade
22 earlier.

23 Q. Who replaced him?

24 A. There were two other leaders in ISIS that were at
25 the helm of the organization for a fairly short time, and

1 they were both killed.

2 And then the leader that controlled the
3 organization for the better part of this decade was Abu
4 Bakr al-Baghdadi, which, as I said, was killed only a few
5 weeks ago in a U.S. Special Forces operation.

6 Q. And is Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi the person who
7 declared the caliphate in 2014?

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. You mentioned earlier that ISIS controlled a
10 territory the size of France or Texas. Is that about the
11 size of the caliphate in 2014?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And were there people that were being governed in
14 this territory?

15 A. Around between 12 and 15 million people, yes.
16 That's the population that lived in that area, mostly
17 Syrians and Iraqis who found their land occupied by ISIS
18 plus those who joined the organization.

19 Q. Did -- is there any estimate of how many people
20 from across the world came to join ISIS about this time
21 period?

22 A. Yeah. As I said, the United Nations estimates
23 between sixty and 70,000 people.

24 Q. Before the declaration of the caliphate, what was
25 the response of the global community to ISIS?

1 A. Well, I think for a few years -- I mean, of course
2 ISIS was designated as a terrorist organization, at least
3 in different iteration, already in 2004. So, of course,
4 the United Nations and the larger part of the
5 international community saw ISIS as a terrorist
6 organization.

7 But I would say that not everybody had grasped
8 the danger that ISIS posed until it started occupying
9 such a large part of Syria and Iraq, until it declared
10 itself a caliphate, and until it started killing in a
11 very ritualistic and brutal way some foreign prisoners
12 that it had taken, some American journalists, some
13 British social worker -- charity workers, the beheadings,
14 those ritualistic assassinations which were broadly
15 broadcasted by ISIS. Those triggered a very strong
16 reaction, and that's when the international community
17 kind of came together and started really confronting
18 ISIS.

19 Q. Are you familiar with a person named Jihadi John?

20 A. Yes, I am.

21 Q. Who is that?

22 A. "Jihadi John" is the nickname given to a British
23 ISIS militant who performed some of the most brutal
24 executions that I think most people would have seen, the
25 one where prisoners in orange jumpsuits are killed in

1 front of the camera, often beheaded or killed in other
2 very brutal ways.

3 Q. In addition to fighting in this area, Iraq and
4 Syria, and controlling territory, did ISIS direct or
5 claim responsibility for any attacks outside Syria and
6 Iraq?

7 A. Yes, many.

8 Q. Are there any that would have been well-publicized
9 in the West?

10 A. Yeah, some in the West, so some -- ISIS initially,
11 I would say -- so, in the, say, 2011, 2012, 2013 years --
12 carried out attacks mostly in the region, Syria, Iraq,
13 and neighboring countries. But by 2014 it began carrying
14 out attacks in the West as well; and several of these
15 attacks are very, very well-publicized.

16 Q. Was there an attack connected to ISIS in Paris in
17 2015?

18 A. Yes. There were more than one actually, yeah.

19 Q. Briefly describe the attacks in Paris.

20 A. The biggest one is the one that took place in
21 November, 2015, where a command of more than a dozen
22 militants who had trained in ISIS camps, had fought with
23 ISIS, were sent by the organization to Europe. They
24 traveled to France, and they carried out four
25 synchronized attacks in Paris.

1 The most famous one is the killing at the
2 Bataclan Theatre. There was a concert taking place
3 there, and members of ISIS walked into the concert as the
4 concert was -- they entered the hall as the concert was
5 taking place, and they killed more than a hundred people
6 with machine guns and then with knives.

7 And there were other attacks that took place
8 on that same night, November 14th, 2015, throughout
9 Paris, one at the stadium where the French national team
10 was playing a game. There was a suicide bombing there.
11 And other commandos linked to ISIS started shooting
12 around some of the boulevards in Paris.

13 Q. Was there also an attack in Belgium?

14 A. Yes. There was an attack that followed the Paris
15 attacks. Some of the very same individuals connected to
16 the Paris attack carried out suicide attacks in Belgium a
17 few months later, so in early 2016, in a metro station in
18 downtown Brussels and at the Brussels International
19 Airport.

20 Q. Turning to the United States, are you familiar
21 with a shooting in San Bernardino, California, in 2015?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Would you briefly describe that event to the jury?

24 A. Yeah. That took place in early December, 2015. A
25 couple, married couple, both of them ISIS sympathizers,

1 people who had for a long time embraced ISIS worldview
2 and had pledged allegiance to the organization, walked
3 into a Christmas party in San Bernardino and started
4 shooting some of the attendees.

5 Q. Were people killed?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Was that well-publicized in the West?

8 A. Extremely well-publicized, yes. It was front page
9 in virtually any American paper.

10 Q. And did I hear you correctly that the couple had
11 pledged allegiance to ISIS?

12 A. They did.

13 Q. Was there also a shooting in Garland, Texas --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- related to ISIS?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Would you please describe that for the jury?

18 A. Yeah. Two individuals based out of Phoenix,
19 Arizona, ISIS sympathizers in direct communication
20 through social media with ISIS members in Syria,
21 traveled -- drove from Phoenix to Dallas; and they
22 planned to attack a contest that some cartoonists had
23 organized in where they wanted to depict the Prophet
24 Muhammad in cartoons. And these two individuals drove in
25 front of the -- drove to the event, walked out of their

1 cars, started shooting. They were intercepted by local
2 police and both of them killed.

3 Q. Was there a shooting in Orlando, Florida, that had
4 some connections to ISIS?

5 A. Yes. Around the same time, one individual who had
6 previously expressed ISIS sympathies walked into a
7 nightclub in Orlando, Florida, and, with automatic guns,
8 started shooting people, killed around 40 people, if I'm
9 not mistaken. As he was carrying out the massacre, he
10 called 9-1-1 and openly said that he was carrying out the
11 attack on behalf of ISIS.

12 Q. To your knowledge, had the Orlando nightclub
13 shooter ever traveled to join ISIS?

14 A. No, he had not.

15 Q. Are you familiar with an event at an Ariana Grande
16 concert in 2017?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Would you please describe what happened at that
19 concert to the jury?

20 A. Yeah. In that case an individual of
21 Libyan-British background carried out a suicide bombing
22 as the concert of Ariana Grande was finishing. He blew
23 himself up right outside basically the exit, killed
24 himself and several young attendees of the concert.
25 Again this individual was ISIS affiliated.

1 Q. We began your testimony by talking about
2 organizations in the global jihadist movement. In your
3 work and your experience, have you ever seen individuals
4 perhaps shift membership or loyalty from one organization
5 to another?

6 A. It's a very common dynamic, and it has happened a
7 lot particularly over the last few years. With the
8 emergence of ISIS, several people and even groups that
9 were in the al-Quaeda orbit moved to ISIS. So, it's
10 fairly common.

11 People speak of a global jihadist movement
12 because there was a fluidity. There is an ideology that
13 is common to all of these groups. Now, all of these
14 groups might have -- part of their agenda might be more
15 local, but they all adhere to what is the global jihadist
16 ideology. So, for a variety of reasons, it is fairly
17 common for people to fluctuate and to move from one group
18 to the other and for groups themselves to move from the
19 orbit of one group to the other.

20 Q. So, thinking about the, perhaps, starting in 2012
21 time period, would there have been a particular draw to
22 ISIS?

23 A. That is exactly what I was referring to. In a way
24 al-Quaeda, in terms of popularity within the jihadist
25 movement, was in the decline. Osama bin Laden had been

1 killed. The 9/11 attacks had taken place more than a
2 decade before; and there hadn't been really much success,
3 from a terrorist's point of view, of course, from
4 al-Quaeda. So, al-Quaeda was on the decline.

5 On the other hand, ISIS was, as we discussed
6 earlier, very successful, was conquering territory, was
7 carrying out attacks globally. So, in the competition
8 that existed within the same movement, ISIS was a more
9 appealing choice than al-Quaeda.

10 Q. Did ISIS establish training camps?

11 A. Yes.

12 MS. COOK: Could we have Exhibit 32 back
13 again?

14 BY MS. COOK:

15 Q. In general, where were the camps located?

16 A. Well, mostly in Syria. I would say close to the
17 border with Turkey. I mean, ISIS controlled, as we said,
18 the territory between Syria and Iraq here (indicating).
19 So, in a way, the entire area was a big training camp;
20 and people fought with ISIS.

21 But a lot of training camps were in place on
22 the border between Turkey, which is here (indicating),
23 and Syria, which is here (indicating), because militants
24 who traveled to Syria to join ISIS would travel to
25 Turkey. That was the most common route to get there.

1 So, the process would be that ISIS would
2 welcome these new recruits and send them to training
3 camps to simply instruct them, to sort out also, first of
4 all, the spies from the actual recruits and then sort out
5 the actual recruits based on their skills and provide
6 them with the basic training, both from an ideological
7 and operational point of view. So, the camps would be,
8 for the most part, on the Syrian side of the
9 Turkish-Syrian border.

10 Q. Would there have been any particular value for
11 ISIS of attracting Western recruits or American recruits?

12 A. Yeah, absolutely. I think the same goes for
13 al-Quaeda. A Western passport is extremely valuable,
14 much more valuable than passports from the Middle East.
15 With an American or a European passport, one can travel
16 throughout the world with less scrutiny than, let's say,
17 a Yemeni or Moroccan passport. You don't need visas to
18 go to most places. It attracts less attention. So,
19 those are very valuable passports for organizations that
20 seek to operate globally and to carry out attacks
21 globally. So, to infiltrate their own operatives
22 throughout the world, having people with Western
23 passports is very valuable.

24 Also, I would say by the second half of 2014,
25 ISIS had become basically advocating/encouraging attacks

1 in the West. The message that came from ISIS shifted
2 from "come and join us" -- the message to potential
3 recruits was "come to the land of the caliphate." By
4 late 2014, the message becomes "stay where you are and
5 carry out attacks where you are. Strike the enemy on
6 their territory."

7 And because the enemy is, for the most part,
8 America and Europe, people who have American and European
9 passports are particularly valuable because they are
10 already there. They are embedded into American and
11 European society. So, there is enormous value in people
12 who have a Western passport.

13 Q. Dr. Vidino, at this point I would like to play for
14 you an exhibit that's already been admitted and, at the
15 end, ask the question whether this particular audio clip
16 has any resonance with specific ISIS statements or
17 speeches.

18 A. Okay.

19 MS. COOK: If we could please have Clip 24E.
20 (Audiovisual presentation to the jury, no tape
21 counter.)

22 DEFENDANT AHMED: Your Honor --
23 (Presentation interrupted.)

24 DEFENDANT AHMED: I object, your Honor,
25 because the words here -- or the sayings here are

1 something that is cut and does not give the whole
2 picture.

3 THE COURT: It's already in evidence, 24E.
4 That can be read and used in the court. The objection is
5 overruled.

6 MS. COOK: Thank you, your Honor.

7 THE COURT: If there are other parts you wish
8 to introduce in your part of the case, you may do so.

9 (Audiovisual presentation resumed.)

10 BY MS. COOK:

11 Q. Dr. Vidino, do you note anything in that clip that
12 seems consistent with well-known statements or speeches
13 from ISIS?

14 A. Yeah, several. I would say one is the idea of
15 carrying out attacks wherever the enemy is. That's a
16 very common theme in ISIS propaganda, which is to make
17 the war against the enemy, against the infidels, global.
18 Attack them wherever you find them. Kill them wherever
19 you find them. That is a very common theme in ISIS
20 propaganda.

21 The second concept is that of reciprocity, if
22 you will. The part about killing children, killing kids,
23 that is also something very common in ISIS propaganda.
24 The propaganda argues that the enemy, America, ISIS
25 enemies in general, kill women and children; therefore,

1 the message goes, ISIS should kill the enemy's women and
2 children. So, I take the part where it says, "Kill the
3 kids, kill the kids" as something related to that. So,
4 these are the common themes.

5 There is the reference to the lifestyle of the
6 Orlando attacker, where the conversation is about how he
7 didn't live the life of a pious Muslim and it says, well,
8 that's why they didn't catch him -- that's why we didn't
9 know about him. That's another theme in ISIS propaganda,
10 which is the idea of the assimilation. Of course, you
11 know, if a terrorist acts in a way that is not exactly
12 how one would expect a terrorist to look like or
13 behave -- so, we would expect them to be a very pious
14 Muslim. The fact that he is drinking or doing other
15 things that are not what a pious Muslim would do is
16 something that would allow him to -- not to attract law
17 enforcement attention, and that's a good way of hiding.
18 That's also a common instruction that comes from ISIS.

19 Q. In 2014 did ISIS have a media spokesperson?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Who was that person?

22 A. A man named Abu Mohamed al-Adnani.

23 Q. If you could spell the last part of that name.

24 A. A-D-N-A-N-I.

25 Q. And in 2014 did al-Adnani put out a speech telling

1 people -- in addition to killing the nonbelievers
2 wherever you are rather than traveling, were there any
3 instructions about how to commit these murders?

4 A. Yeah. The instructions were as broad as one can
5 imagine them. The instructions were kill them wherever
6 you find them, in any way you can; and then there were
7 examples. And later ISIS propaganda was equally broad in
8 saying kill them however you can do it, with guns, with
9 explosives, use a vehicle, use a knife, use your bare
10 hands, poison them. It was really -- the point was the
11 war is global. The war is endless. Kill the enemy
12 wherever you find them, however you can.

13 Q. In a written publication did ISIS ever provide
14 instruction on how to kill with a vehicle?

15 A. Yeah, in several publications. Al-Qaeda still
16 has several official publications which it puts out in a
17 variety of languages, mostly Arabic and English; and they
18 provide very detailed instructions on how to carry out
19 attacks, including vehicular attacks.

20 So, there are issues of, for example, *Dabiq*,
21 D-A-B-I-Q -- which is the official English language
22 publication of ISIS -- that provided step-by-step
23 instructions on how to rent a truck and carry out an
24 attack by mowing people down with the truck, what
25 documents you should give to the truck rental company,

1 how you should behave, how you should choose your target,
2 very detailed.

3 Q. Are there any incidents in the United States where
4 the attacker seems to have closely followed the
5 instructions that you've just described?

6 A. Yes. There was an attack that took place in
7 Manhattan where an individual, who was a known ISIS
8 sympathizer of Uzbek origin, rented a truck which was
9 almost identical to the one used in the ISIS magazine,
10 rented it in New Jersey, crossed the bridge, drove into
11 Manhattan and started driving on a bike lane and killed
12 several individuals who were biking or walking on or near
13 the bike lane.

14 Q. Did ISIS claim responsibility for that attack?

15 A. It did.

16 Q. Have there been any recent incidents where people
17 appear to still be carrying out the instruction to kill
18 them wherever you find them, however you can?

19 A. Yes. We've had one literally last week in London,
20 the attack on the London Bridge by a convicted ISIS
21 supporter. We've had plots thwarted in Europe and in
22 North America over the last few months by ISIS
23 supporters. Just yesterday there was an arrest of an
24 alleged ISIS supporter in Virginia. So, that's -- ISIS
25 still has supporters globally.

1 Q. Dr. Vidino, were you provided with an assymmetric
2 warfare manual to review for this case?

3 A. I was.

4 MS. COOK: Can we please pull up Exhibit 1?

5 BY MS. COOK:

6 Q. Could you please tell the jury. Overall, how
7 would you characterize this document?

8 A. I would say this is a very typical --

9 DEFENDANT AHMED: I object for using this
10 book.

11 THE COURT: Well, again, that's an item that's
12 already been admitted in evidence in this case; so,
13 anybody can use the book.

14 DEFENDANT AHMED: This book, first of all, was
15 in another case, in another subject. Honestly, up to
16 today I don't know how this book got into their hands.

17 THE COURT: Okay. Whatever. It's here in
18 evidence in this courtroom; so, it could be read and
19 discussed in court. That's overruled.

20 BY MS. COOK:

21 Q. Dr. Vidino, if you will maybe start again.
22 Overall, how would you characterize this document?

23 A. I would say this is a quintessential jihadist
24 recruitment and training manual. This is similar to many
25 other manuals that circulate in the jihadist community

1 that groups like ISIS, like al-Qaeda, like al-Shabaab
2 produce or even individuals close to these groups or part
3 of the global jihadi movement produce. It replicates the
4 tones, the messages, structure of a lot of these manuals.
5 So, it's -- yeah. It's in line with -- it's your classic
6 jihadi manual. Let's call it like that.

7 Q. So, it wouldn't be unusual for a manual such as
8 this to be produced by one group but then circulated,
9 shared with, and used by other groups?

10 A. Absolutely. That's a very common dynamic.

11 Q. In your opinion, could this document be useful for
12 recruiting individuals to a jihadist cause?

13 A. Yes. Absolutely.

14 Q. I'd like to turn to some general concepts in the
15 manual, beginning on page 1. The first phrase that we
16 see on this page is "Punishment for Hypocrisy" and then a
17 description of what will happen to hypocrites.

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. Does hypocrisy ever appear as a theme in jihadist
20 propaganda?

21 A. Yeah. "Hypocrisy" has a very specific meaning in
22 jihadist propaganda. Jihadists accuse Muslims who don't
23 follow Islam the way jihadists think Islam should be
24 followed -- so the very literalist extremist view of
25 hypocrisy -- of basically being Muslims by name only but

1 not really being good and true Muslims.

2 The hypocrisy -- and, of course, there's
3 variations on the theme. But generally the accusation is
4 leveraged against those who claim to be Muslim but do
5 not -- particularly rulers -- but then do not implement
6 Islamic law, do not abide by Islamic law. So, the
7 accusation that comes from jihadists is that they are
8 hypocritical, they are not really Muslims, they only
9 claim to be such. And, again, according to the jihadist
10 movement, the punishment for hypocrisy is death.

11 Q. Could that be motivating, the idea that if you
12 don't engage in this requirement of offensive jihad, you
13 will suffer death and hellfire?

14 A. That is one of the cards used by jihadist groups
15 to attract recruits. It's -- together with other
16 messages. But there is the idea of it's a religious duty
17 for you to join us, to be the vanguard that tries to
18 establish the perfect God-mandated state ruled by Islamic
19 law. If you don't do that, then you are committing a
20 grave sin, you are a hypocrite, you are not really a true
21 Muslim; and the punishment for that is hellfire.

22 So, there is that dual message, which is there
23 are a lot of rewards, most in the afterlife, for you if
24 you join this battle and you try to create an Islamic
25 State; but if you don't do that, there is a big

1 punishment in the afterlife.

2 MS. COOK: If we could turn to page 4.

3 BY MS. COOK:

4 Q. At the beginning of this page, we read, "In the
5 name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful." Is there
6 any significance to this greeting?

7 A. That's a mainstream implication -- Islamic
8 implication. This is not specifically jihadist. I would
9 say any conservative Muslim -- so nothing to do with
10 terrorism *per se* -- would use this kind of phrasing at
11 the beginning of a speech or at the beginning of when
12 writing a document. So, it's mainstream Islamic
13 implication, if you will.

14 Q. So, is that something that would be familiar to
15 the Muslim community?

16 A. Oh, yes. Absolutely. Any Muslim would know that.

17 Q. And is it also commonly used in jihadist
18 propaganda?

19 A. Yes, of course.

20 Q. On the same page -- first, let me ask this: We've
21 discussed jihad as a religious obligation. Does this
22 manual advocate engaging in violent jihad?

23 A. It does, repeatedly.

24 MS. COOK: Could we turn to page 11?

25 And I'd like to focus in on the paragraph

1 under "With Respect to the Mujahidin."

2 The paragraph above, "With Respect to the
3 Mujahidin."

4 BY MS. COOK:

5 Q. At the end of this paragraph, we read, "Should the
6 situation stabilize for the Mujahidin, they will continue
7 their jihad throughout the Muslim lands and liberate them
8 from the control and occupation by the Jews and
9 Christians. In so doing, they will have performed their
10 duty in fulfilling the neglected religious requirement of
11 offensive jihad."

12 Is this a very clear and direct statement that
13 offensive jihad is a religious requirement?

14 A. Extremely clear. Could not be any clearer than
15 that.

16 Those two sentences together really encompass
17 the core beliefs of the jihadist movement, the idea that
18 Jews and Christians are the enemy that occupy Muslim
19 lands and that it's a religious duty for good Muslims to
20 fight them and carry out jihad and that that endeavor is
21 a religiously sanctioned duty. It's very clearly stated.

22 Q. Is occupation a common theme in jihadist
23 propaganda?

24 A. Yes, extremely. That's -- the idea of it tries to
25 convey that the Muslim world is under occupation. The

1 whole Muslim world is under occupation. Whether that is
2 direct occupation -- in some cases they would argue the
3 Palestinian territories are under occupation from Israel.

4 But at the same time, they would say that all
5 Muslim lands are indirectly occupied because the
6 rulers -- Muslim rulers that rule over them are, in
7 reality, puppets of the Jews and the Christians, of the
8 West. They are not true Muslim. They are -- going back
9 to what we were saying earlier -- hypocrites. They don't
10 rule those countries with Islamic law; so, they are
11 really puppets of Jews and Christians, therefore,
12 enemies.

13 And there is no place in the Muslim world,
14 from Morocco to Indonesia and everything in between,
15 that, according to the jihadist movement, is really a
16 place where Muslims can live Islam fully and freely
17 and -- they are all occupied. And the religious duty
18 that comes with occupation is fighting the occupation
19 through jihad, through violence.

20 Q. Is the idea that Muslim people are being oppressed
21 or enslaved almost common in jihadist propaganda?

22 A. Extremely common.

23 Again, it is creating that grievance, that
24 sense of oppression that is crucial in sort of inciting
25 and radicalizing people. It's sending the message that

1 you are oppressed -- you, your people, your religion,
2 your culture, they are oppressed. You should rise up.
3 Extremely common theme.

4 MS. COOK: Could we please turn to page 15.

5 And if we could enlarge, yes, the "Means of
6 Using Force."

7 BY MS. COOK:

8 Q. Here we read, "Jihad without force does not exist;
9 just as battles cannot be waged without resources that
10 can ensure the continuous flow of this power. Jihad
11 cannot exist without the supremacy and growth of this
12 power, and the need for military and civilian forces is
13 essential. An unarmed youth will be ineffective to our
14 mission unless God Almighty wills otherwise. Hence,
15 weapons are a must if there are those ready to carry
16 them. A weapon is useless without someone able to use it
17 with skill and strength. However, these characteristics
18 must be accompanied by strong moral convictions and
19 knowledge of the sharia law. This is the one and only
20 true weapon for the Mujahidin, for without it he will
21 turn into a bandit."

22 Does this paragraph help to clarify that the
23 manual is discussing violent jihad?

24 A. This is as clear as it can be that -- the
25 importance of creating a military force, fighting

1 militarily, fighting jihad, you know, "an unarmed youth
2 will be ineffective," "weapons are a must."

3 It's clearly an argument made for people who
4 want the Mujahidin. So, those who fight jihad, the noble
5 warriors, they need to fight. They need to be trained.
6 They need to be properly trained and, again, both in
7 military tactics but also, as it says here, "have strong
8 moral convictions and knowledge of the sharia law" and
9 for them to fight because there is no other way to end
10 this occupation than through military force. It's very
11 clearly stated.

12 Q. Does violent jihad require physical training?

13 A. It does.

14 You know, groups like this -- jihadist groups
15 understand that recruits need to be properly trained,
16 again, both from an ideological point of view, provided
17 with a clear mission and clear guidance as to what the
18 mission is, but at the same time provided with the
19 necessary military skills to operate, know how to handle
20 weapons, explosives, how to counterfeit documents, how to
21 securely communicate, and so on and so forth.

22 MS. COOK: Could we turn to page 17.

23 BY MS. COOK:

24 Q. In the third paragraph, under "Collection,
25 accounting, securing, and allocation of funds," there is

1 a statement about four sentences down that "Jihad will
2 consume funds very rapidly. Therefore, money must be
3 raised, secured, and properly allocated prior to any
4 operations or movements taking place."

5 Is there an understanding reflected in this
6 manual of what is needed materially to carry out
7 offensive jihad?

8 A. Very clearly. I think this could -- if you took
9 away the word "jihad," this could be in any military
10 manual for any army, a clear understanding that without a
11 supply chain, without funds that buy the boots that
12 soldiers wear, the weapons that soldiers use, the funds
13 that are needed to pay the soldiers, the money to buy the
14 gas that goes into the tanks and so on and so forth --
15 all these activities are very expensive and necessary to
16 carry -- to wage war. This is very logical and very
17 clearly explained here.

18 Q. And is it common for manuals of this type to draw
19 on military manuals?

20 A. Yeah. I would say that through -- it's very
21 common for all manuals having -- it's very evident in
22 this manual that it has moments in which it clearly is
23 based on mainstream Islamic concepts, on jihadist
24 ideology. In others, it very much reads -- and I would
25 argue that it is probably copied and pasted from

1 mainstream military manuals that one could use for -- one
2 could find at any military academy of any country's army.

3 So, it uses a lot of the concepts of guerilla
4 warfare, military strategy, sort of adapts them to the
5 jihadist movement. But anybody that has any basic
6 military training would recognize a lot of concepts and
7 ideas here.

8 Q. And, in fact --

9 MS. COOK: If we could turn to page 5.
10 Enlarge the paragraph that begins "Second definition" in
11 the middle of the page.

12 BY MS. COOK:

13 Q. There is a reference there to "guerilla warfare,
14 or the 'war of the dog and flea'" in the middle of the
15 paragraph. Would this be an example of drawing on a
16 military tactic that might be used by an inferior force
17 against a superior military force?

18 A. Absolutely. This is the terminology that is not
19 proper of the jihadist world. This is borrowed from
20 mainstream military language, the idea of, as you said,
21 an inferior military insurgent force attacking a more
22 powerful force through small attacks, or the flea
23 attacking the dog, much more powerful, but eventually
24 winning through small operations.

25 This is -- there are books that are titled

1 "War of the Dog and the Flea," and they talk about the
2 Vietnam War because that was a tactic that the
3 Vietnamese -- the North Vietnamese were using. So, this
4 is mainstream military jargon borrowed for a jihadist
5 manual.

6 Q. And could ideas like that, such as the war of the
7 dog and the flea, be a justification for performing acts
8 of terrorism, in other words, casting them as acts of an
9 inferior force against a superior force?

10 A. That is exactly what terrorism is.

11 Q. Does this manual advocate for the creation of an
12 Islamic State under Sharia Law?

13 A. It does, throughout the document.

14 MS. COOK: If we could remain on page 5 and
15 enlarge the last paragraph.

16 BY MS. COOK:

17 Q. About three lines down, beginning with, "Moreover,
18 one of the goals of the Mujahidin is the liberation of
19 Muslim populations oppressed by the power and
20 dictatorship of an unjust and tyrannical regime whether a
21 local government or a foreign one and establishing a new
22 social system which implements its laws through the
23 guidance of the Quran and Sunnah. Thus, you will find
24 that most of the Islamic movements share the same
25 definitions and causes for their existence."

1 Could you please explain to the jury how this
2 paragraph relates to the objective of establishing an
3 Islamic State?

4 A. Yeah. I mean, the concept in the first sentence
5 is what we were saying, the idea that Muslim populations
6 are oppressed, are occupied, as I said, either by an
7 unjust tyrannical regime or a foreign force.

8 The idea that jihadist groups have is that
9 whether there is direct occupation -- so, the presence --
10 foreign occupation, the presence of American troops or so
11 on and so forth -- or the regime of puppets, of Muslims
12 by name only. The king of Morocco, the president of
13 Egypt, these are rulers that for jihadist groups are not
14 really Muslims. They are allied with the West, and they
15 are not implementing Islamic law; so, they are oppressing
16 true Muslims.

17 And the idea is that those who fight jihad
18 should establish a new social system which implements its
19 laws, which establishes -- liberates Muslims, liberates
20 those lands, and establishes Islamic law there.

21 And I think the second sentence goes to what
22 we were saying earlier where it says that most of the
23 Islamic movements share the same definition and causes
24 for their existence. It makes the points that, yes,
25 within the jihadist movement there are several groups.

1 There is al-Quaeda. There is ISIS. There is al-Shabaab.
2 There's many others. But at the end of the day, all
3 these groups have the same ideology, have the same goals,
4 and work together.

5 Q. The reference to a "social system which implements
6 its laws through the guidance of the Quran and the
7 Sunnah," would that be Sharia Law?

8 A. Yes. That is the creation of an Islamic State.
9 An Islamic State, according to jihadist groups, is only
10 one that implements Islamic law, Sharia Law, fully in, of
11 course, the very literalist extremist way in which the
12 jihadist groups interpret it. That is the perfect
13 society jihadist groups want to create and want to use
14 violence to create.

15 MS. COOK: Could we please turn to page 9.

16 Please enlarge the paragraph beginning "With
17 respect to the Mujahidin."

18 BY MS. COOK:

19 Q. Beginning at the second sentence, "The Mujahidin
20 will know that they are now on their way to establishing
21 an Islamic caliphate government."

22 Is this the overall objective of all of the
23 information and the training and the guidance provided in
24 this manual, the establishment of an Islamic caliphate
25 government?

1 A. Correct. That's what jihadist groups want, to
2 create what to them is the perfect Islamic system,
3 implementing Islamic law. That is the caliphate. That's
4 what these groups want.

5 Q. And reading further in this same paragraph, we
6 read, "You will find that they will step up their
7 political and military campaigns, in order to highlight
8 the milestones of this ongoing struggle between them and
9 their primary adversaries, the Jews and the Christians,
10 and their puppets and clients."

11 Does this illustrate what you've testified to
12 earlier, that the primary enemies are the Jews and the
13 Christians?

14 A. Yeah. Primary enemies are the Jews and the
15 Christians. The way jihadist groups frame this is that
16 there is a giant global conspiracy against Muslims and
17 against Islam and that Jews and Christians are working to
18 undermine or even destroy Islam, and then the puppets and
19 clients are the Muslim rulers who are allied of Jews and
20 Christians and are not implementing Islam properly.
21 Those are sort of the other enemy.

22 Q. Does that idea of rulers being puppets and clients
23 of the enemy provide justification for attacking even
24 governments in majority Muslim countries?

25 A. Yes, absolutely, as we said earlier, rule

1 according to the jihadist worldview. Muslim rulers who
2 do not implement Islamic law and that are allied of the
3 West are hypocrites. They are not really Muslims. So,
4 they have committed the sin of hypocrisy, basically not
5 being true Muslims; and the punishment for them is death.

6 Q. How does jihadist propaganda typically portray the
7 mujahideen?

8 A. As noble warriors; selfless, courageous warriors;
9 sort of a vanguard that interprets Islam correctly; a
10 small minority that decides to sort of leave behind all
11 worldly possessions and fight, sacrifice themselves, in
12 many cases their lives, to do what pleases God, to what
13 should be the ultimate aim of all good Muslims, which is
14 creating an Islamic State.

15 There is obviously -- you know, it's
16 propaganda; so, they will create these videos that
17 portray these individuals as extremely noble, extremely
18 brave. That's what propaganda of extremist groups does.

19 MS. COOK: Could we please turn to page 5.

20 And enlarge the last paragraph that begins
21 "The Objectives of Guerilla Warfare."

22 BY MS. COOK:

23 Q. We read, "The objectives the Mujahidin are
24 striving for are noble and supreme. They are heeding the
25 call to establish a purely Islamic system, free of all

1 evil deeds and aspects of disbelief. It is based on the
2 Quran and the Sunnah."

3 Is this an illustration of what you just
4 talked about, the propaganda that portrays mujahideen as
5 noble?

6 A. Yeah. It's more of the same. They are called --
7 they are responding to a higher call. They are noble.
8 They are brave. And they are sacrificing themselves to
9 establish this perfect utopian society, this Islamic
10 State which is free of all evil deeds and aspects of
11 disbelief. It's perfect, it's just, and so on and so
12 forth.

13 So, they are these noble warriors who know
14 what to do and create in a way -- the concept of a
15 vanguard is very important for jihadist groups. It's the
16 idea that a small minority -- because at the end of the
17 day, those who adopt this ideology, as we said, are a
18 fringe of a fringe of a fringe within the Muslim world.
19 So, the way they see themselves is this small vanguard
20 that understands true Islam and fights for it.

21 Q. Does this also reflect the duality you mentioned
22 earlier, that failure to obey the call to engage in the
23 religious requirement of violent jihad leads to death and
24 hellfire but --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- joining the cause makes you part of the noble
2 mujahideen?

3 A. Exactly that. There is no in between. Either you
4 join the mujahideen and you sacrifice yourself and then,
5 of course, you're noble and the rewards for you in the
6 afterlife are endless; or you don't and then you are a
7 hypocrite. You are not a true Muslim; so, the
8 punishments in the afterlife for you are endless.

9 MS. COOK: Could we please turn to page 14.

10 And enlarge the fourth complete paragraph, the
11 one beginning, "The Mujahidin." I'm sorry. The fourth.

12 BY MS. COOK:

13 Q. It begins, "The Mujahidin must take everything
14 into consideration. The Mujahidin are fighting for an
15 entire nation, protecting its beliefs, holy sites and its
16 people, their honor, land and fortune, and defending it
17 from attacks and oppression."

18 Could you please address the concept of the
19 Muslim nation and how it is used in jihadist propaganda?

20 A. Yeah. Well, the way all Muslims see it is that
21 those who believe in Islam are part of a global
22 community, which is called "Ummah," U-M-M-A-H. That is a
23 mainstream concept in Islam. It is not just jihadists
24 who use this concept.

25 Of course, jihadist groups would spin this

1 concept and argue that the mujahideen are defending this
2 global entity -- the mujahideen are those who truly
3 understand Islam and are fighting to defend the global
4 community that is under attack from Jews, from
5 Christians, from hypocrites and so on and so forth. Of
6 course, what they are trying to give is this idea of one
7 community which is under attack by external and internal
8 enemy forces.

9 MS. COOK: If we could please turn to page 30.

10 BY MS. COOK:

11 Q. In this part of the manual, we see instruction on
12 selecting targets.

13 MS. COOK: If we could highlight where it
14 begins "Christian military activity going on in purely
15 Islamic societies."

16 BY MS. COOK:

17 Q. What is the threat that Christian missionaries
18 pose?

19 A. Jihadist groups have always very strongly opposed
20 the activity of Christian missionaries that go to the
21 Middle East because the idea is that they might convert
22 people to Christianity, that people might leave Islam and
23 become Christians. Of course that is, from the jihadist
24 point of view, a very grave danger and sin punishable by
25 death. If you leave Islam, the punishment according to

1 jihadists is death.

2 And, of course, the activity of groups that go
3 to the Middle East and proselytize and try to introduce
4 people to religions other than Islam is highly
5 unacceptable for groups like al-Qaeda, like ISIS.

6 MS. COOK: Could we please turn to page 31.
7 And enlarge the very last paragraph under "Human
8 Targets."

9 BY MS. COOK:

10 Q. "We must target and kill the Jews and Christians,
11 and we say unto any enemy of God and of his prophet, 'We
12 have come to slaughter you.'" Today we must not let
13 borders separate us, nor allow geography to keep us
14 apart, making every Muslim country our country and their
15 land our land. We must turn the" --

16 MS. COOK: Please turn to the next page.

17 BY MS. COOK:

18 Q. -- "idolaters' countries into a hell just like
19 they have done to Muslim countries ('act in proportion to
20 the wrong that has been done to you.')

21 Is this particular language about turning the
22 idolaters' countries into a hell like they turned our
23 country into a hell -- do you see that reflected in
24 jihadist propaganda?

25 A. Yeah. We discussed that earlier. It's the

1 concept of reciprocity. It's like when we were listening
2 to that phone call, they talked about killing children.
3 They kill our children. Then we are justified in killing
4 their children. This is, I mean, exactly how it's
5 phrased. "Act in proportion to the wrong that has been
6 done to you."

7 So, the narrative that comes from jihadist
8 propaganda is that Jews and Christians, the enemy, have
9 turned Muslim lands into hell. They attack. They bomb.
10 They subjugate. They oppress Muslim majority countries.
11 So, we, the jihadist movement -- we should do the same.
12 We should bring the war to them. We should
13 oppress/slaughter them in their countries, in their
14 homes. It's bringing the war to the enemy.

15 Q. And staying on page 32 --

16 MS. COOK: If you could zoom out.

17 BY MS. COOK:

18 Q. -- there is a priority of human targets by order
19 of importance which lists particular nationalities. Is
20 this, in your experience, unusual?

21 A. No. It's fairly common. The idea of indicating
22 targets and doing so by their roles or their
23 nationalities, that is very common. It variates from
24 manual to manual, from propaganda piece to propaganda
25 piece; although, I think Jews and Americans rate fairly

1 high on all of them. But generally speaking, that's kind
2 of how it works.

3 You know, they -- these manuals serve to -- as
4 we said, to both provide an ideological framework and
5 specific guidance from an operational point of view. So,
6 here having a list of enemies, of targets, is very
7 important and very common.

8 Q. Why would Americans be so high on the list?

9 A. Because America is the most powerful country in
10 the West, because the American military is, from a
11 jihadist's point of view, what stops them from obtaining
12 power in the Middle East.

13 As we said, the goal that these groups have is
14 that of creating Islamic States in the Middle East, of
15 turning everything -- at least in Phase 1 of their
16 project -- everything in the Muslim world -- so, from
17 Morocco to Indonesia and everything in between, the whole
18 Arab world, the whole Middle East and beyond that -- into
19 an Islamic State.

20 In these countries they are faced with the
21 challenge of local regimes, what they call "puppets."
22 These local regimes, argues jihadist propaganda, exist
23 and are powerful only because America supports them, only
24 because America provides these regimes with the
25 political, military, and economic backing that allows

1 them to be stronger than jihadist groups.

2 The thinking is if we attack Americans,
3 Americans will withdraw from the Middle East and then
4 that will weaken local regimes and we would be able to
5 overcome them and establish Islamic States.

6 So, America is the -- other than, of course,
7 the many cultural and religious differences that jihadist
8 groups have with Americans, the fact that Americans are
9 predominately Christian and so on and so forth, there is
10 a very strong political military reason as to why America
11 ranks on top of the list. It is the most powerful
12 country in the West, more than, you know, U.K., Spain,
13 Australia, Canada, or Italy.

14 Q. I'd like you to now explain some of the specific
15 references in the manual.

16 MS. COOK: If we could turn to page 6.

17 THE COURT: We need to take a break pretty
18 soon. How much more do you have of this?

19 MS. COOK: Probably another 10 or 15 minutes.

20 THE COURT: Do you think you can get it
21 finished before break time or...

22 MS. COOK: What time is the break, your Honor?

23 THE COURT: Well, soon.

24 MS. COOK: Yes.

25 *

1 BY MS. COOK:

2 Q. Page 6. The bottom paragraph makes a reference to
3 deals being offered to the mujahideen in the Arabian
4 Peninsula by Safar Al-Hawali Al-'Awaji.

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. Are those actual people?

7 A. Yep.

8 Q. Who are they?

9 A. Leaders of the so-called "Sahwa," S-A-H-W-A.
10 These are individuals in Saudi Arabia who were close to
11 Osama bin Laden, sort of spiritual leaders of the
12 jihadist movement in Saudi Arabia. And the idea here is
13 that some regimes -- in this case the Saudi regime --
14 will try to bargain with those individuals, try to co-opt
15 them so that they are no longer challenging the local
16 regimes.

17 MS. COOK: If we could turn to page 13, the
18 first paragraph under "The Fundamental Conditions for
19 Launching a Successful Guerilla War."

20 BY MS. COOK:

21 Q. At the end of this paragraph, there is a reference
22 to Sheikh Abu Abdullah and Dr. Ayman. Who are these
23 people?

24 A. Sheikh Abu Abdullah is Osama bin Laden. Abdullah
25 is bin Laden's first son. "Abu" means father. This is a

1 common way for jihadists to identify themselves not using
2 their first name but saying father of Abdullah. So,
3 that's Osama bin Laden.

4 And Dr. Ayman is Ayman al-Zawahiri, who was at
5 the time al-Quaeda's Number 2 and currently al-Quaeda's
6 Number 1.

7 Q. So, is Osama bin Laden one of the former leaders
8 of al-Quaeda?

9 A. The founder and former leader, yes.

10 MS. COOK: Please turn to page 14. Enlarge
11 the second paragraph, beginning "Similarly."

12 BY MS. COOK:

13 Q. There is a reference here to "the blessed bombing
14 in 1416 AH, the toppling and destruction of the American
15 towers." What do you assess this to be a reference to?

16 A. This is -- so, 1416 AH is the Islamic way of
17 counting years. So, that is equivalent to 1995 in our
18 calendar, in the Gregorian calendar. So, this refers to
19 attacks that took place in Saudi Arabia.

20 Specifically, the American towers are two
21 buildings who are in Khobar, which is a town in Saudi
22 Arabia where there was a U.S. military installation that
23 was attacked in Ninety -- around that time.

24 Q. Is that common --

25 A. These are attacks in Saudi Arabia that took place

1 in the mid Nineties.

2 Q. Is it common for jihadist propaganda to use the
3 Islamic calendar?

4 A. Yes. They would not use a Christian calendar.
5 They would use the Islamic calendar.

6 MS. COOK: Please turn to page 31. Under
7 "Economic Targets," the paragraph beginning "Other goals
8 include the expulsion of foreign capital from local
9 markets and the benefit of the economical impact of the
10 operations being conducted in the area. This was
11 accomplished recently when the economic impact of the
12 blessed Madrid attacks affected the European economy as a
13 whole."

14 What do you assess the Madrid attack reference
15 to be?

16 A. That's, I would say, fairly clearly a reference to
17 the March, 2004, train bombings in Madrid that killed
18 almost 200 people. That was an operation carried out by
19 an al-Quaeda-linked cell.

20 MS. COOK: If I may have a moment, your Honor.

21 THE COURT: Yes.

22 MS. COOK: No further questions at this time.

23 THE COURT: All right. We'll take a break and
24 come back.

25 (Recess, 3:46 p.m. to 4:12 p.m.)

1 (Open court, defendant present, jury
2 present.)

3 THE COURT: Are you ready for
4 cross-examination?

5 CROSS-EXAMINATION OF LORENZO VIDINO

6 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

7 Q. Good evening.

8 A. Good evening.

9 Q. I'm sorry for this. Did you meet, before coming
10 here, with the prosecutor?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. How long did you sit with the prosecutor?

13 A. I sat, I think, four or five times.

14 Q. How long each meeting -- or each time for how
15 long?

16 A. I would say a total of seven, eight hours.

17 Q. What was the content of this -- of these meetings?

18 A. My testimony.

19 Q. Do you know about my case?

20 A. Not -- no, not really. Not the specifics.

21 Q. And how did you come to testify on a case that you
22 don't know?

23 A. Well, because I was asked to testify not about the
24 specifics of the case. I was asked to provide my
25 expertise on topics that I assume to be related to the

1 case.

2 Q. Don't you believe that this is assistance of the
3 court and could lead the court?

4 A. I'm sorry. I didn't --

5 Q. Could lead justice. Sorry.

6 A. Can lead justice?

7 MS. COOK: Your Honor, could we have the
8 question asked again?

9 THE COURT: I don't understand that question.
10 Please repeat -- rephrase.

11 DEFENDANT AHMED: Yes.

12 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

13 Q. Your presentation might distort the truth.

14 A. Well, I came here to talk about what is my
15 expertise, which is ISIS, the manual specifically, and
16 related topics. How that -- the impact that it has on
17 the trial, of which I don't really know the specifics, is
18 beyond me.

19 Q. Aren't you aware that whether -- knowingly you can
20 hurt people, also unknowingly, knowingly and unknowingly?

21 A. As I said, I came to provide my expertise, which I
22 gave. Of course it has an impact on the trial. That is
23 for the jury to assess.

24 Q. You listened to a small part of the recording.
25 Did you listen to it before?

1 A. No, I did not.

2 Q. Did you hear what came before, the words or the
3 conversation before, what came before and also after?

4 A. No.

5 Q. So, if you are not aware, I think the government
6 was really playing with this tape.

7 MS. COOK: Objection to the defendant
8 testifying.

9 THE COURT: Sustained. That's your opinion.
10 It's not an appropriate question.

11 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

12 Q. You said that the jihadi movement started in the
13 Eighties, is that true, in Afghanistan?

14 A. I said the global jihadist movement started in the
15 Eighties, and I believe I said there were smaller
16 groupings that I would call "jihadists" active at the
17 local level before this.

18 Q. What was the role of the Afghani mujahideen in the
19 Eighties?

20 A. So, the Afghan mujahideen, those from Afghanistan,
21 were fighting against the Soviet Union to liberate their
22 country.

23 The foreign fighters, mostly Arab but anyways
24 known Afghan fighters, went there to also help the
25 Afghans against the Soviet Union; but they were more

1 religiously motivated. They were more ideologically
2 motivated.

3 THE COURT: I'm sorry. I think that wasn't
4 clear. Who were more ideologically motivated?

5 THE WITNESS: The foreign fight -- the Afghans
6 were trying to liberate their country from a foreign
7 occupation. The ones that came from outside of
8 Afghanistan were working with the Afghans but were
9 more -- so, to them it wasn't a war of liberation of
10 their own country. They were ideologically motivated by
11 a concept of global jihad. If you were from Morocco,
12 Jordan, Indonesia, your country wasn't occupied by the
13 Soviet Union. You were going there to fight against the
14 Soviet Union because you felt you belonged to this global
15 jihadist movement.

16 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

17 Q. Do you remember the leaders of the mujahideen at
18 that period?

19 A. Afghans or Arabs?

20 Q. Afghans.

21 A. There were a few: Massoud, Hekmatyar --

22 Q. Rabbani?

23 A. Rabanni.

24 Q. Sayyaf?

25 A. Abu Sayyaf.

1 Q. Sayyaf.

2 What was the objective of these mujahideen at
3 that time?

4 A. As I said, repelling the Soviet invasion,
5 overthrowing the Soviet-friendly regime in Kabul, and
6 creating a Soviet-free Afghanistan, which in some cases
7 would have been religiously -- would be in sort of an
8 Islamic State. It depends. Different leaders have
9 different views.

10 Q. So, their objective was an Islamic governance?

11 A. For some of them, yes. For some, not.

12 Q. Who was helping -- what countries -- what states,
13 what countries were helping these mujahideen?

14 A. Several. Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, indirectly the
15 United States. Several other countries.

16 Q. Who gave them the weapons -- anti-craft weapons,
17 Stinger?

18 A. The United States, indirectly.

19 Q. So, the United States was procreating an Islamic
20 State.

21 A. No. The United States was against communism; so,
22 the United States was fighting anybody that was fighting
23 the Soviet Union and cared little about the ideological
24 tendencies of those who were fighting the Soviet Union.

25 So, throughout the Cold War, it entered into

1 many alliances with a lot of people without asking too
2 many questions; and the concept of an Islamic State and
3 what these leaders could do was lost in the mind of most
4 American policy makers. So, to them the -- to America
5 the enemy was the Soviet Union. It provided weapons to
6 those who were fighting the Soviet Union.

7 Q. So, they preferred to have an Islamic ruling than
8 having a Communist ruling?

9 A. I don't think it was a conscious calculation, but
10 yes. The big enemy was communism, yes. It was the Cold
11 War.

12 Q. And these leaders would come to the United States
13 and take monetary support, financial support, from people
14 and from supporters?

15 A. A few came, yes.

16 Q. Do you know Abdullah Azzam?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Who is he?

19 A. Abdullah Azzam was the leader -- I'd say the most
20 important of the Arab fighters fighting in Afghanistan
21 and one of the cofounders of al-Qaeda.

22 Q. How many times did he come to the United States
23 and he was taking funds and -- from here?

24 A. Several times. He conducted several fund-raising
25 trips throughout America.

1 Q. That means al-Quaeda was taking funding or support
2 from the United States.

3 A. From supporters within the United States, not from
4 the United States Government. The fund-raising trips
5 were done in certain mosques where supporters would give
6 money.

7 From people in the United States but not the
8 United States Government. That's a completely different
9 thing.

10 Q. Were there Muslim Americans who went to
11 Afghanistan to fight with the Arab mujahideen and also
12 the Afghan mujahideen?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And from all Arab and Islamic states, countries?

15 A. From most, yes.

16 Q. And at that time what was the role of bin Laden?

17 A. Bin Laden was, for the most part, fund-raising for
18 the Arab mujahideen there. He had a network of wealthy
19 people that he could tap to get funding for the Arab
20 fighters in Afghanistan.

21 Q. It is said that bin Laden at that time, he was not
22 extremist. Is that true?

23 A. It's debatable what "extremist" is. I would say
24 that his beliefs were quite extremist already back then.

25 Q. It is said that he is a member of the Muslim

1 Brotherhood.

2 A. He was, yes.

3 Q. And they are considered -- the Muslim

4 Brotherhood -- that they are modernists.

5 A. That is highly debatable.

6 Q. Do you have any information about the Khalden

7 base?

8 A. What do you mean "information"?

9 Q. When was it created?

10 A. In the mid to late Nineties. It was one of the
11 first camps that al-Quaeda did after bin Laden came back
12 from Sudan in '96. But, of course, it -- if I might --

13 Q. Are you sure?

14 A. But, of course, it operated also in the late
15 Eighties during the war with the Soviets. There was a
16 break from '91 to '96 when al-Quaeda was based in Sudan.

17 Q. Have you been to Afghanistan?

18 A. No, I have not.

19 Q. People who went there, were there, they said that
20 Khalden camp was not part of al-Quaeda. Yes? It was
21 separate.

22 A. I don't know who these people are. I don't --
23 it's difficult for me to assess that.

24 Q. This is what was said. Didn't you hear from
25 anyone?

1 A. I don't know. From who should I have heard?

2 Q. From people who went there. Didn't you get this
3 information?

4 A. I did not get that information from people who
5 went there, no.

6 Q. And how did you know that it was al-Qaeda?

7 A. Because there are videos -- there are al-Qaeda
8 videos with people training there and because it is
9 assessed -- it was a camp that was attacked by the U.S.
10 Government as an al-Qaeda training camp and there are
11 videos produced by Al-Sahab, which is the al-Qaeda
12 official media outlet.

13 Q. Do you know the camp Jihad Wahl?

14 A. Jihad what?

15 Q. Jihad Wahl.

16 A. No, I'm not familiar.

17 Q. Isn't that the video that you just talked about
18 now?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Are you sure that there is a video where there is
21 training -- where they are training in Khalden?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Can you please describe to us the location, what
24 it looked like?

25 A. It's in basically a -- what it looks like, a lot

1 of -- sort of basically like a deserted area in the
2 footstep of mountains. There is -- what you can surmise
3 from the video is a few fairly primitive houses. It's
4 very -- I mean, it's called a "training camp." Of course
5 it's -- it wouldn't compare to, like, a military base as
6 of a regular Army. It's fairly primitive, but it was
7 shown in videos.

8 Q. They say that Khalden has -- there are no houses
9 there in Khalden.

10 A. Who is "they"? I'm not sure.

11 Q. People who were there.

12 A. Okay. I...

13 MS. COOK: Objection, your Honor. We need to
14 proceed by question and answer.

15 THE COURT: Sustained. This has gotten out of
16 control. They/people.

17 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

18 Q. So, you did not go to Khalden?

19 A. No, I did not.

20 Q. And probably you received the wrong information.

21 MS. COOK: Objection to the defendant
22 testifying.

23 THE COURT: Sustained. You could ask him a
24 question about that.

25 *

1 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

2 Q. Can you confirm hundred percent that Khalden
3 belongs to al-Qaeda?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. This is your -- this is your testimony today --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- that this is true?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And what is the evidence -- your evidence --

10 MS. COOK: Objection, your Honor.

11 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

12 Q. -- for that?

13 MS. COOK: Asked and answered.

14 THE COURT: Sustained. Sustained. Move on.

15 He's already answered that.

16 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

17 Q. You mentioned Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. What is the name of his group?

20 A. The first one -- you mean the -- the first one he
21 created was Tawhid wa'al-Jihad.

22 Q. Tawhid wa'al-Jihad?

23 A. Tawhid, unity of God.

24 THE INTERPRETER: Yes. I just -- T-A-W --

25 THE COURT: What is the --

1 THE WITNESS: Unity of God. T-A-W-H-I-D.

2 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

3 Q. And where was this group, this organization?

4 A. At the very beginning in Afghanistan, in the
5 Western part of Afghanistan, in the heart Province of
6 Afghanistan. And then after the U.S. invasion of
7 Afghanistan, it moved to Iraq.

8 Q. When did they change their names?

9 A. They started changing their names in early 2001,
10 where they merged with Ansar -- or they worked together
11 with Ansar al-Islam, which is a group operating in
12 Kurdish parts of Iraq.

13 Q. What is the new name?

14 A. What do you mean? When? Now or --

15 Q. No, the second name.

16 A. What do you mean "the second name"?

17 Q. After the Tawhid.

18 A. Okay. Ansar al-Islam.

19 Q. Ansar al-Islam.

20 What is the -- what was the reason for
21 occupying Iraq?

22 A. For the U.S. occupying Iraq?

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. That is fairly complicated. There are different
25 motivations given by the U.S. Government that range from

1 regime change, because the regime of Saddam Hussein was
2 supporting a variety of problematic actors in the region,
3 to access to -- to alleged access to weapons of mass
4 destruction by -- on the part of the Saddam Hussein
5 regime.

6 Q. Was that true?

7 A. What was true?

8 Q. These -- the destruction, the weapons.

9 A. The weapons?

10 Q. Yes, of destruction.

11 A. Apparently weapons were not found in Iraq.

12 Q. So, it was a big lie.

13 A. That's not my place to say. It's --

14 MS. COOK: Objection, your Honor. That's not
15 a question.

16 THE COURT: Sustained.

17 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

18 Q. And what was the result of that occupation?

19 A. That's a very complicated question. I mean, what
20 do you mean "what was the result"? From what point of
21 view? I mean, that's very broad.

22 Q. Wasn't it a center for the meetings or for the
23 existence of mujahideen?

24 A. Iraq, you mean? Yes. It became -- after the U.S.
25 invasion of Iraq, the country became one of the main

1 places where jihadists congregated, yes.

2 Q. Do you think that if Saddam did not leave, would
3 these organizations exist?

4 MS. COOK: Objection, your Honor.
5 Speculation.

6 THE COURT: Sustained.

7 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

8 Q. In your experience. And you have experience in
9 that field, since you are expert in these subject matters
10 and in politics.

11 MS. COOK: Your Honor, is there a question?

12 THE COURT: I think maybe he wants an opinion
13 about the question he asked before.

14 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

15 Q. The situation that we have now in Iraq and in
16 Syria, don't you think it resulted from the occupation of
17 the American forces of Iraq?

18 A. It's a combination of many factors; but
19 unquestionably the U.S. actions are a big part of it,
20 yes.

21 Q. Don't you believe that the treatment of prisoners
22 in Abu Ghraib in Iraq -- you know, the humiliation of
23 prisoners and the undressing of prisoners -- increased
24 these groups?

25 A. Sure.

1 Q. That means everyone is participating in the
2 destruction of this world.

3 A. I guess. That's one way of putting it.

4 Q. You said that you were in North Africa.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What place?

7 A. Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt.

8 Q. What do you think of Muslim populations in North
9 Africa?

10 MS. COOK: Objection to relevance, your Honor.

11 THE COURT: Sustained.

12 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

13 Q. And also you went to the Middle East?

14 A. Some parts.

15 Q. Did you meet with any international jihadi groups
16 or individuals?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. How was it? Did you meet them? Did you talk to
19 them?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And what were their opinions and their
22 objectives --

23 MS. COOK: Objection as to --

24 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

25 Q. -- or their goals?

1 MS. COOK: -- relevance.

2 THE COURT: He's talked about this to some
3 extent. I think he can ask that.

4 But it's a rather broad question. Why don't
5 you narrow the question?

6 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

7 Q. For example, the people you talked to -- what were
8 the reason they became jihadists?

9 A. Well, that's complicated. Of course, different
10 people would give different opinions and different
11 reasons as to why they did that. There are some
12 commonalities in their stories which one, of course, has
13 to take with a pinch of salt. Different reasons for
14 every individual.

15 Q. Give us an estimate or -- if you can
16 evaluate/estimate how many people got killed during the
17 occupation of Iraq.

18 A. Hundreds of thousands.

19 Q. Don't you believe that killing one human being
20 without any right -- don't you think that this is wrong?

21 A. Of course, yes.

22 Q. Frankly, don't you think that there is injustice
23 and -- injustice inflicted by the leaders of these
24 countries? For example, Egypt now, don't you think that
25 he is a dictator?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. However, he is supported by the West, especially
3 the United States.

4 A. Yes. Correct.

5 Q. Doesn't that lead to these -- to these people to
6 look to the West in unnatural way or looking at it in a
7 different way?

8 A. Yes, sure.

9 Q. Do you agree with me that getting rid of Gaddafi
10 created problems in -- huge problems in Libya and in
11 North Africa?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Do you agree with me that at the end of the
14 Nineties, beginning of 2000s, al-Mukarta (Phonetic
15 spelling) did not have much support or encouragement from
16 Islamic countries?

17 A. It's always been a group that had support only
18 from a minority of people.

19 Q. Don't you think that they got wings in their backs
20 after -- their wings when they were -- when -- after
21 Gaddafi left --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- and Saddam left?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. These groups now, are they increasing or

1 decreasing?

2 A. Which ones? It depends. Jihadi movement in
3 general?

4 Q. Jihadi movement and terrorists.

5 A. Yeah, generally speaking, yes.

6 Q. Do you agree with me that these drones that killed
7 innocent people also had a role?

8 A. In increasing support for these organizations?

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. Yes, sure.

11 DEPUTY CLERK: Can the interpreter speak
12 louder and clearer, please?

13 THE INTERPRETER: Yes.

14 DEPUTY CLERK: Thank you.

15 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

16 Q. Do jihadis use this law: An eye for an eye and a
17 tooth for a tooth?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Do you know that the tape that you listened to --
20 recording that you listened to was about them?

21 A. Was about the groups? Yes. That's --

22 THE COURT: Well, which recording are we
23 talking about?

24 DEFENDANT AHMED: That we were listening to
25 just a few minutes ago.

1 A. Yes.

2 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

3 Q. I don't know al-Awlaki, but it is said that he was
4 not involved in jihad. Is that true?

5 A. No, it is not true. He was.

6 Q. In the beginning. In the beginning.

7 A. What do you mean "in the beginning"? I mean, when
8 he was a child, obviously he wasn't. What do you mean
9 "in the beginning"?

10 Q. It was told that even he visited President Bush.
11 Is that true?

12 A. No, that's not true. At least I'm not aware of
13 it. It's not publicly known.

14 Q. First time I hear that this is what was said.

15 MS. COOK: Objection, your Honor. Not a
16 question.

17 THE COURT: Sustained. This is far afield.

18 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

19 Q. What do you do for work, Mr. Vidino?

20 A. I'm an academic. As I explained earlier, I run a
21 research center at a university.

22 Q. What kind of work do you do? Do you work on these
23 groups?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. So, this is your -- this is what you do? This is

1 how you earn a living?

2 A. Yes, correct.

3 Q. Do you agree with me, especially in court, to be
4 sure that you are sure of what you are going to
5 represent, to make sure that you know what you are going
6 to present?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Because probably unknowingly you can do wrong to
9 someone else.

10 MS. COOK: Objection, your Honor. We've
11 already had this line of questioning.

12 THE COURT: Sustained. We've already talked
13 about that.

14 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

15 Q. Do you remember in the Nineties the Taliban, they
16 held -- or they arrested a journalist, a British
17 journalist?

18 A. I don't recall that.

19 Q. And don't you remember she spit in their face?

20 MS. COOK: Your Honor, the witness has said he
21 does not recall this.

22 THE COURT: Sustained.

23 A. Are you talking about Yvonne Ridley? Okay, yes.

24 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. I do remember, yes. I don't remember the spitting
2 in the face; but, yes, they did kidnap -- they did hold a
3 British journalist, Yvonne Ridley, yes. I don't know the
4 spitting, but yes. The journalist, yes.

5 Q. Didn't they release her without any payment or
6 anything?

7 A. I'm not -- they released her. I'm not sure if
8 there was a payment or not. That's sometimes not made
9 public. But they did release her, yes.

10 Q. Do you know the reason why the Taliban emerged in
11 Afghanistan in the Nineties?

12 A. That's complicated, but they managed to be the
13 strongest force in the Afghan Civil War of the mid
14 Nineties. The Taliban were the strongest force; and they
15 emerged as managing to control the majority of Afghan
16 territory, not everything but the majority of it.

17 Q. Do you agree with me that former jihadis, they
18 started fighting to -- among themselves who is going to
19 take power; and they destroyed the whole country?

20 A. Yes. Correct.

21 Q. So, you agree with me -- so, this is -- this is
22 the basis or -- the basis for the emergence of the
23 Taliban?

24 A. There was a Civil War in which -- that started
25 from the infighting between the groups that had fought

1 against the Soviets. They started fighting among
2 themselves. The Taliban emerged as the winners of that
3 Civil War, yes.

4 Q. Have you heard that now there are negotiations
5 between the Taliban and the U.S. Government?

6 A. Yeah, of course.

7 Q. Is that true?

8 MS. COOK: Objection as to relevance. The
9 majority of the testimony from Dr. Vidino on direct was
10 about al-Quaeda and ISIS.

11 THE COURT: Well, there was some testimony
12 about this -- overruled -- about the Taliban.

13 A. Yes, it's true. It's publicly known, yes.

14 BY DEFENDANT AHMED:

15 Q. Don't you agree with me that it is a very clever
16 plan for peace?

17 A. I don't know what the plan is so -- it's
18 negotiations taking place. I'm not sure. What do you
19 mean?

20 Q. This is to keep the innocent from being killed or
21 to protect people and not to waste money.

22 A. Sure. Yeah.

23 Q. Isn't peace better than war?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Don't you think that there might be peace?

1 A. In Afghanistan?

2 Q. Afghanistan and other places. Don't you think?

3 A. Hopefully, sure.

4 Q. I finish my questions. Thank you.

5 A. Thank you.

6 MS. COOK: Nothing further from the United
7 States, your Honor.

8 THE COURT: All right. Is this witness
9 excused?

10 MS. COOK: Please.

11 THE COURT: Any objection to excusing the
12 witness?

13 DEFENDANT AHMED: No objection.

14 THE COURT: All right. Thank you. You may
15 step down, and you are excused.

16 THE WITNESS: Thank you, your Honor.

17 (Excerpt of proceedings concluded.)

18 COURT REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

19 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ON THIS DATE, MARCH 13,
20 2020, THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT TRANSCRIPT FROM THE
21 RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

22 /s/
23 CHRISTINA L. BICKHAM, RDR, CRR

24

25

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